

Church of God

Evangel

March 26, 1956



easter issue

the Readers' response

To the Editor:

I want to thank you for the 46th Anniversary Issue of the Evangel. There are a few faces in the picture on the cover that I recognize—but another generation has grown up since I worked at the Publishing House. I had completely forgotten the picture on page 5 made in 1924. I remember it very well now after having my memory refreshed. There was another one made in front of the little building long before this too. The little building dated 1910, as I recall, was built about 1911 or 1912. Mr. Tomlinson had an office in his home at first and the printing was done in Walter Roger's plant downtown. About 1912, a Mr. Charles H. Shriner moved a small plant from Spring Place, Georgia, into the "1910 building." The plant, such as it was, belonged to Mr. Shriner—an old pony cylinder and a small pearl platen also without throw-off, and a shirt tail full of type that was as ancient as the presses. Mr. Shriner was a very fine and patient man and was, I am sure, grossly underpaid. He taught me the case in 1913. I worked for him during summer vacations and after school for a couple of years or until he folded up and went back to teaching school in Georgia. He is buried at Marianna, Florida. God rest his soul. Then the printing was done again by Walter Rogers until the Church built the 2-story part of the "1917 building" and acquired a plant of secondhand equipment of their own. I am not sure, but I do not think the 3-story part of that building was built until after World War I. I worked in the plant before and after World War I. I left the Publishing House in the summer of 1920 and went to Illinois for four years. I came back to the Publishing House in February, 1924, as a journeyman printer (under J. W. Llewellyn). I stayed a year and went to Florida at the end of February, 1925. I just thought you would be interested in a bit of Publishing House history that no one seemed to remember. I guess I am the only one of the first "crew" left.

T. R. Payne
Washington, D. C.



The Editor's Message

Coming Next Week "SPRING CONSECRATION"

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WE BELIEVE

1. In the verbal inspiration of the Bible.
2. In one God eternally existing in three persons; namely, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
3. That Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the Father, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. That Jesus was crucified, buried, and raised from the dead; that He ascended to heaven and is today at the right hand of the Father as the Intercessor.
4. That all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that repentance is commanded of God for all and necessary for forgiveness of sins.
5. That justification, regeneration, and the new birth are wrought by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.
6. In sanctification subsequent to the new birth, through faith in the blood of Christ; through the Word, and by the Holy Ghost.
7. Holiness to be God's standard of living for His people.
8. In the baptism of the Holy Ghost subsequent to a clean heart.
9. In speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, and that it is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.
10. In water baptism by immersion, and all who repent should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
11. Divine healing is provided for all in the atonement.
12. In the Lord's Supper and washing of the saint's feet.
13. In the premillennial second coming of Jesus. First, to resurrect the righteous dead and to catch away the living saints to Him in the air. Second, to reign on the earth a thousand years.
14. In the bodily resurrection; eternal life for the righteous and eternal punishment for the wicked.

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Vol. 27—No. 4
March 26, 1956

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial	3
He Lives	Earl T. Golden 4
The Power of His Resurrection	James M. Beaty 5
The Easter Commission	Mrs. Avis Swiger 6
We Can Live	George L. Britt 8
The End of Easter Mourning	H. A. Norman 10



The Supper at Emmaus, by Rembrandt

"... as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them."
—Luke 24:30

A. Devaney, Inc., N.Y.

satan's easter blunders



ATAN IS A FOOL. He is not omniscient, therefore he does not know everything. If he were all-knowing he certainly would never have done some of the things he did at the time Christ was crucified. He made several gross blunders that he would be happy to call back today if it were possible. If he had seen how that which he did would be used under God to his own defeat we may be sure that he never would have done them.

The greatest blunder that the Devil committed was that of stirring the people up to crucify Jesus. While Christ lived on earth He healed the sick, raised the dead, cheered the sorrowing, strengthened the weak, and—most important of all—saved the sinful. Quite naturally, this gave Satan constant humiliation and defeat. The evil men in whose hearts he dwelt were annoyed by the popularity and success of Jesus Christ and soon their evil minds began to scheme how His activity might be smothered. The result of their planning was a scheme to put Him to death, for this would still His voice, and this would halt His work, and this would stop His forgiving of sins. So Christ was crucified. Satan did not know when he inspired this act, and the leaders of the Jews did not know when they instigated it, that far from stopping souls from being saved, the spilled blood of Jesus Christ would be the means, under God, of the salvation of all people in all the world who will accept Him.

If Christ had never been crucified, then He would have saved only those with whom He came into direct contact, but, through the sacrifice of His blood, all men everywhere may find life eternal. Naturally, God planned it this way and so it had to be, but it was the Devil who directly inspired Judas to betray the Lord, the Jews to insist upon His death, and the Romans to agree to it. When Christ was put to death, His eleven faithful apostles took up His burden and to them were drawn first about 120 others, and then 3,000, and then 5,000, and then multitude upon multitude who accepted the blood of Jesus Christ as the token and source of their salvation. It would have been to Satan's advantage to keep Christ alive forever, but as I have said, he does not know everything.

ANOTHER BLUNDER Satan made, and God used for great glory, was the scourging of Jesus. Pilate believed when he ordered Jesus to be scourged that he might thus placate the blood-thirsty demands of the Jews. No doubt it was Satan who inspired Pilate's order to inflict greater suffering upon the Lord. Thus Jesus was led into the dungeon of the Praetorium and lashed with the cruel whips of the Romans. To a degree Satan's plan was successful, for indeed this unnecessary act greatly added to His suffering; but still the enemy would call it back today if he possibly could, for that one act provided the Church with its source of divine healing. Isaiah 53:5 tells us clearly that it is with His

(Continued on page 12)



Descent From the Cross by Rembrandt.

Religious News Photo.

HE LIVES

by EARL T. GOLDEN

TWO MEN WERE engaged in a strange race. The younger man, John, because of his youth, had outdistanced the older man, Peter, and had arrived at their destination first. Youth then gave way to age as John stepped back to allow Peter the entrance to an empty tomb. Why this strange race and why this weird examination? The disciples had been perturbed by a report of some women who had gone early in the morning to anoint the body of their crucified leader, Jesus—only to find Him gone. It was to confirm this report that the two had hurried to the tomb. Their examination revealed that indeed the tomb was empty, but where was the Christ? Their curiosity had not long to run; for, within a few hours, the missing Christ appeared through closed doors and locked windows to a group of despairing, fearful disciples. In this group were the two who had examined the empty tomb. Their

fears were soon calmed and their spirits renewed as they beheld in joy and awe the risen hands and the wounded side of the living, resurrected Saviour. Yes, He was alive! Now, no foe could ever make them doubt. Not even the tyrant's lash or the martyr's stake could beat or burn this assurance from their hearts.

Hundreds of years have transpired and history has unfolded its tale of a religion that would not, and could not, die because it was, and is, founded upon a living Christ.

"Does He live?" weeps the sinner as he bows on bended knees with contrition and repentance pouring from his soul. "Yes, He lives!" cries the transformed soul as he rises to his feet and shouts, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see."

"Does He live?" moans the burdened, distressed Christian as he is hounded by Satan and surrounded by defeat. "Yes, He lives!" shouts the victor as he rises from his secret place of prayer with new-found courage, zeal and peace of mind.

He is alive, as is witnessed in the transforming of sinners into saints.

He is alive, as is witnessed by every victory won by the harassed and burdened Christian.

He is alive to those who have sought and found the secret of constant companionship with and in Christ. They can shout with the great Apostle Paul, "Not I, but Christ liveth in me." It is very much like the little boy who said, "I know He is alive because I met and talked with Him today."

Christian Friend, are you content with the memories of a companionship with Christ that have grown vague? Can you say with the song writer, "He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today! He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way. He lives, He lives, salvation to impart! You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart."

"He lives!" as is witnessed by His manifestation in nature. Every budding tree cries, "He lives!" Every blooming flower witnesses, "He lives!" Every singing bird chirps, "He lives!" Every rippling brook chants, "He lives!" Every twinkling star jingles, "He lives!" So great is the manifestation of a living Christ in nature that David declared that, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." He concluded that only a fool could say in his heart, "there is no God."

"He lives!" as is witnessed by His intervention in behalf of nations. Today the "star of David" flies over the little Jewish nation of Israel because the Christ of the Jew is alive to confirm God's covenant with Abraham.

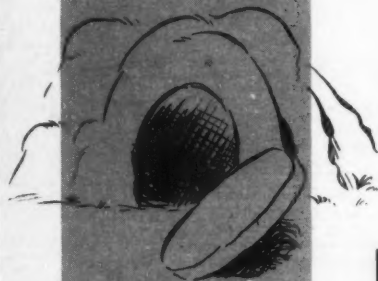
The United States will never forget such names as: Plymouth Rock, Independence Hall, Valley Forge and Gettysburg because Christ is alive to help the nation whose "God is the Lord."

The Church of God will never forget the date, August 19, 1886, when a little band of eight people joined what was known then as the Christian Union. Only a living Christ could have guided the future of such a tiny group that today, in 1956, is one of the strong voices in Pentecost around the world.

A living Christ means so much to the living that

(Continued on page 13)





The power of His resurrection

by JAMES M. BEATY

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," Colossians 3:1; "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection," Philipians 3:10.

SOW WONDERFUL TO serve the living Christ! He lives—He arose! Only He could say, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen." The heart of the gospel is the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All that God has prepared for man is obtainable only through man's identification with Christ in His crucifixion and resurrection.

Paul writes to the Colossians, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above . . . set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." What are the "things above"—those things which we should seek and on which we should set our affections? We find at least a part of the answer in Paul's writings to the Philippians, "Yea . . . I count all things but loss . . . that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection." This is what Paul's affection was set upon—"him and the power of his resurrection." Now what does the "power of his resurrection" mean? First, it refers to something that Paul could know; it also refers, quite evidently, to the power that was manifested at the resurrection of Christ. Let us look at these two things in chronological order.

Our day is a day of power-consciousness. Whether it is transportation, or communication, industry or war, power and more power is the demand. At every new demonstration of power, the world marvels. Yet it only

sees natural power and, many times, only the bolsterous type of that. One Sunday morning, nearly two thousand years ago, there was a manifestation of spiritual power such as our old world had never seen before. There was no deafening sound, no blinding light, no mushrooming cloud; but there was the manifestation of "the exceeding greatness of his power . . . the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead," Ephesians 1:19, 20. It was the power of the Almighty God, breaking open the gates of hell and death, tearing asunder the shackles of sin, and victoriously bearing forth the keys of death and hell. It was the incarnate Almighty coming forth from the regions of death, "because it was not possible that he should be holden of it," Acts 2:24. It was He who was "declared to be the Son of God with power, . . . by the resurrection from the dead," Romans 1:4. It was He who could say, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Matthew 28:18.

The resurrection of Christ is different from other historical events—the discovery of America for example—in that it is related to us not only historically but also experimentally. Paul wrote to the Ephesians of his "making mention of you in my prayers; . . . That . . . God . . . may give unto you the spirit of wisdom . . . The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead," Ephesians 1:16-20. So the power of His resurrection is great to us-ward who believe. How then do we, or can we, know the power of His resurrection?

We know the power of His resurrection initially in regeneration. The natural man is dead in sin. He is in the tomb of sin and death. His only hope of resurrection is through the power of Christ's resurrection. Physical might, brilliant learning, scientific skill, and polished culture avail naught in imparting spiritual life to the natural man. But there is hope! "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses," Colossians 2:13. Yes, we were dead in sins, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," Ephesians 2:4, 5. Yes, the power that worketh in regeneration, bringing light and life and banishing darkness and death, is the power of His resurrection.


WE SHALL KNOW the power of His resurrection consumately in that day of the coming of our "Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself," Philippians 3:20, 21. For "if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you," Romans 8:11. When? On that day for which all creation groaneth and for which "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," Romans 8:23.

That day will be a day of power and glory! "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal (Continued on page 13)

The Easter Commission



by MRS. AVIS SWIGER

 HE FIRST EASTER message was spoken to Mary early on the day of the Resurrection—"... go to my brethren..." and on the evening of the same day to the disciples "... as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

Essentially, this has always been the message of the Easter season—sending, going, bringing new life! It is not the empty tomb that was important but the power that was possessed by the followers of Christ because there had been a resurrection.

Some very important things had happened between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. Jesus had gone down into the prison and had set the captives free, after making known to them that God's plan for the salvation of man was complete. He broke the power that Satan had over the righteous dead when he took from that wicked one the keys of death, hell and the grave. All who had died in the faith, having had hope in the One who was to come, were delivered from Satan's power at that time; but the ones who were alive must free themselves from that satanic power. In order to do that they needed to know the gospel message. They could not know unless they were told; they could not be told unless someone was sent with the message. So Jesus took care of that immediately after the Resurrection and commissioned His disciples.

The very first person that He talked to was Mary, near the garden tomb. His first command to her was to go tell the others the glad news of His resurrection. He had suffered and died to bring redemption to all men, and now He was alive forevermore to complete that plan. However, men must know about the gospel if it was to bring them deliverance, so He sent His first missionary with a message of great power and gladness. She was faithful to her commission, and the disciples heard the good news.

On the first Easter evening the disciples were gathered together in a room behind locked doors. As they discussed the momentous events of the day, He appeared with them. It was wonderful for them to have a little while in which to rejoice because He was alive again; but that could not last long, for there was work to do. The message was not just for them, but for all men everywhere and in every generation.

Jesus commanded them to go and spread the glad tidings. Their work was to be as much a part of God's plan as His death and resurrection had been. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you..." were His words to them on that occasion. If man failed to carry out the Great Commission to "go and tell," the full plan for man's salvation could not be realized.

The first Easter message was "I send you... go tell..." From that day to this, the message of Easter has been one of new life—physical, spiritual, and moral. Jesus sent His followers to tell the glad tidings of His

resurrection. That carried with it the hope of resurrection, or new life, for all who believed in Him. However, this was a message that meant more than just a new body; it meant a spiritual awakening and quickening, also.

The disciples were downcast and very sad because their dreams and hopes had been blasted by the Crucifixion. There seemed to be no way out of their maze of difficulties until the message of the Resurrection came to them. So it is with the world today. Sin has brought them sadness and despondency; the only help for them is the message of Easter—new life through Jesus Christ. The same command to "Go... tell" is ours today. We can best celebrate His resurrection by bringing hope of eternal life to those who still wait in outer darkness.

Jesus met with His disciples and others over a period of forty days before He ascended to His rightful place with the Father. These meetings took place at different times, under varying circumstances, but with a unity of purpose. That purpose seems to have been to impress upon His followers the seriousness of the task which was theirs—the completion of world-wide witnessing. At the beginning of this postresurrection period, He sought to convince them of their personal opportunities. At the close of the period, He made it more than plain that He expected them to shoulder the responsibility of spreading the gospel.

THERE ARE FIVE records of the *Great Missionary Commission*—one in each of the Gospels: Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 20:21; and in Acts 1:8. There is no record of any other subjects which He discussed with His disciples during this time. So it would seem that there was a special reason for this five-fold recording of the Great Commission. Could not that reason well be that it was the thing closest to His heart—the very most important thing that He could speak about? That is the reasonable answer to the question, surely. He had suffered much for the success of the Father's plan, and it could yet be hindered if man did not complete his part in it. Therefore, Jesus was most concerned that all should fully understand their personal responsibility in the matter.

This Commission did not cease with the Apostles but has been handed down to each succeeding generation of Christians. Go, preach, teach and testify about the saving grace of our risen Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, was the message of the first Easter; it was the subject of conversation during the forty-day resurrection period; and it was the final message which Jesus spoke to them ere a cloud obscured their vision of Him. It will continue to be the message until He reappears on a cloud to catch away His people.

The story is told of a Chinese Christian who was questioned by unbelievers about what he thought he would do when he got to heaven. He answered that the first thing he would do would be to shake hands with Jesus and thank Him for saving his soul. They questioned him about what he would do next. He answered that he would hunt up the missionary who had brought him the gospel and thank him. Finally he said he would want to thank all who had helped to send the missionary. Each one of us can fit into the plan of God in one of these places. If we can not go, we can send someone.

(Continued on page 12)

We Can Live

by GEORGE L. BRITT

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also," St. John 14:19.

THE MOST GLORIOUS day that blighted earth has ever seen was that Sunday morning, in April, a.d. 30, when Jesus of Nazareth stepped from the tomb. On that morning when the matchless, glorious God, the Son, snatched the scepter of death from Satan's hand and came out of the tomb with the same body that had entered cold in death now glowing and throbbing with spiritual life, the vital question of all human ages was answered for earth's transitory inhabitants. Dying millions had groaned, travailed, probed and hoped concerning this vital question: "If a man die shall he live again?" Job 14:14. It was answered by the Son of God—the Author of a new and imperishable life. The best that man could produce in his groping for spiritual life without divine revelation was the Greek philosophies, which left him helpless and hopeless.

Until the glorious event of the Resurrection, members of the fallen race were subject to bondage during all their lifetimes because of the fear of death. Since the Son of God came from the tomb that Sunday morning and proclaimed the heavenly message: "Because I live, ye shall live also," millions have realized that to live



is Christ and to die is gain. Before this time, in a few instances, the dead had been revived to physical life; but never before, in all ages, had a dead body been raised and changed to a spiritual body. Christ was the Firstfruits of the First Resurrection.

All living things strive to continue living—whether insects, animals or men. Men of all epochs of civilization, from prehistoric times to our day, have been pre-occupied with the mysteries and hopes of life after death. The most horrible thought that has ever been entertained by a rational mind is the thought of cessation of life.

Human beings learn to love the beauties of creation and are calmed and soothed by the harmony of music. They are thrilled by the beauties of a summer sunset, and, on starry nights, they are awed and mystified by the footprints of an omnipotent intelligence in the sky. They have a horror of leaving this material world. Men have been known to cherish this life so much that, in their last hours, they desired to fondle any material object just to keep in contact with the material world with which they felt so close a kinship.

Men of all ages have groped, yearned and hoped for a future life. Job phrased this universal longing of mankind into words when he said, "Oh that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time and remember me," Job 14:13. Because of Job's integrity in his darkest hour, God let him look into the future and see the completion of the most beneficent work He would ever accomplish for the lost race. While Job's heart palpitated with hope and thrilled with assurance, he proclaimed: "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, Job 19:25, 26. David, another of a selected few to whom this hope was revealed, said his flesh should rest in hope. "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (Sheol—paradise below); neither shalt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," Psalm 16:10.

When Jesus of Nazareth stepped out of Joseph's new tomb with a spiritual body on that first Easter morn, this glorious truth sprang forth before the suffering, death-bound race in all its heavenly radiance and effulgent glory. This was the answer to the poignant cry of earth's millions, "If a man die shall he live again?" This is God's answer to earth's millions who are subject to bondage through the fear of death, as they ride the conveyer belt of time through this span that is as a doctrine, a discipline, a creed, a ritual, or a system. of life and gives a reason for our existence. The God who subjected the creature to vanity has subjected the same in hope.

Mortal man is offered freely an immortal destiny. This is God's answer to hungry millions who seek life from a doctrine, a discipline, a creed, a ritual, or a system. Here is truth penetrating this dark world from the center of the universe. *Life is in a person*, a divine person—the Source and Fountain of all life. Jesus of Nazareth, begotten of God, born of a virgin, is He who was with God before the world was, He who in the beginning was with God; He who was God, and He through whom God made all things that are made. This same God, the Son, took upon Himself the form of a man, tasted death for every man, and conquered death for

whomsoever will. He did not just show the way to life. He is the Resurrection and the Life.

OUR FINITE minds lack the capacity to fully grasp the magnitude and eternal results of this event. Mere words cannot portray the importance of this event in human history. When Jesus of Nazareth sprang from Joseph's tomb alive forevermore, He shook three worlds: The angelic world, which, for centuries had guided the preparation for this event in the affairs of men stood in breathless awe and adoration when they viewed the event of all time. Men in a world groveling in the sorrows of life and groping for life hereafter, were begotten to such a lively hope they could face death with joy and without fear. Many were even anxious to lose their lives in this age to gain it in endless ages. The spirit world of the righteous dead was stirred when paradise was changed from below (Matthew 12:39, 40) (Luke 23:43) to above (2 Corinthians 12:4) and Christ led captivity captive.

This truth occupied the mind of the Deity before men were created. God's efforts in directing human destiny for four thousand years were for this event. Preparing for this event had been the central activity of the angelic world for ages. Archangels ran errands in preparation for this event. What are considered the major events of secular history were only incidental to, and necessary for, this event of all the ages. The rise and fall of world empires were subordinated to their ability to serve this event. Media-Persia fell and Greece arose to provide the Greek language as a universal vehicle to proclaim



this event to mankind. Rome's purpose for existence was to provide a period of tranquility, law, and order, so this event could be proclaimed to earth's death-bound millions.

We mortals have juvenile unscriptural ideas of the spirit realm. This flesh is our natural habitation. Any spirit being in a spiritual body is feared as ghostly, and a spirit existence is looked upon as highly undesirable. No doubt, if angels were condemned to a life in the flesh, they would fear it and look upon it as highly undesirable. God is a spirit. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. In fact, we are spirit beings imprisoned in a house of flesh. It is the flesh nourished by the blood, that is subject to suffering sickness and death. It is corruptible. It cumbers the activities of a spirit being. The greatest man of God that ever lived got a view of paradise, whether in the body or out of the body he did not know, but, when he saw the eternal glories of heaven and the unspeakable superiority of spirit bodies, he groaned to make the change. He said he groaned earnestly for the house (body) from heaven that mortality might be swallowed up of life. He further said that redeemed souls groaned within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of the body (Romans 8:23). We can never realize and enjoy full sonship until salvation is completed by the redemption of the body.

This is hard for the mortal mind to grasp: Christ was the Firstfruits of the First Resurrection, and, when we are raised by His mighty power, throughout eternity, we will have bodies like His body (1 John 3:2). Of His body, no man can speak in particular. This we know: It was not ghostly in the human sense; it was flesh, bone, and spirit. He could go through closed doors, yet He ate before the disciples to still their fears and doubts. His body had the scars and same features as before, but it was spiritual and glorified.

No doubt, when we are delivered from the bondage of this corruption (body) into that glorious liberty of the children of God, our intellect will be infinitely enlarged until we can enjoy the glory of God and understand the mysteries of His creation. Now we know in part, but then we shall know as we are known. We will not be bound by the ordinary means of locomotion, as bodies of flesh are, but will flit from place to place at will. We can not yet fully comprehend what we shall be, but it is enough to know that we shall be like Him; for we shall know Him as He is. Because He lives, we shall live also.



*"Then
were the disciples
glad, when
they saw the Lord,"
John 20:20b*

The End of Easter Mourning

by H. A. NORMAN

"Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord," John 20:20.

JHE FOUR NEW Testament Gospels give the account of how, during a celebration of deliverance, those delivered tried to exterminate the real Deliverer. He, being the Son of God, prayed for their forgiveness and in His death, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows . . ." Isaiah 53:4. In His resurrection he brought gladness to those who mourned.

THE DARK NIGHT

The world's darkest night was that night when there was no Saviour. Man's darkest night is that night when he has no Saviour. For Jesus is the Light of the world and the Light of life. There was a dismal, extended night inaugurated by the hands of men. A cross bearing the Christ gave a dull report as it struck the bottom of a hole in the ground. The sun hid its face from the earthly scene; the earth shook in its setting; the rocks rent; the veil of the temple, which had reserved the holy place for the high priests only, was torn apart. "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy

city, and appeared unto many," Matthew 27:52-53. It is likely and fitting that all nature was disturbed. On a cross, the Son of God was offered a drink of the world's sour vinegar. He stated, "It is finished," bowed His head and died.

No funeral parlor was available for his body. Not many were present to show their last respects. No pall-bearer seemed available; probably, flowers were not in order; consequently, flower girls were not needed. It was irreligious for His body to hang on the cross during the approaching high Sabbath (John 19:31); so, conveniently, one of Jesus' rich disciples begged for and was granted permission to take His body (Matthew 27:57). The whole world—apart from sinful man—must have been in mourning as His body was wrapped in linen and placed in Joseph's own tomb. The cricket must have given a mournful chirp, if any chirp at all; the birds must have sung a mournful song, if any song at all. The trees must have given a sigh of mourning. Jesus Christ was buried.

FALSE SECURITY

Those who do not accept peace and security in Christ forever seem trying to attain it without Him. And any apparent security without Christ is false. The priests and the Pharisees said that they remembered that Jesus said he would rise again (Matthew 27:62, 63).

Upon their request, Pilate gave them permission to make the tomb sure so the disciples could not come and steal His body away. "So they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch", Matthew 27:66. These people hardly knew they were serving the divine cause by eliminating all possible chances of an imposter. Anyone that would come from a sepulchre so securely sealed would surely be divine. "The world in solemn stillness lay" awaiting the coming of the third day.

FEARS AND DOUBTS

Matthew 17 reveals that Jesus had informed the disciples of His coming betrayal, arrest, crucifixion and resurrection on the third day. The gruesome experiences of the trial, arrest, and crucifixion seemed to have made them forget that Jesus was to rise again. Fear seemed to seize them. After all, they had been seen with Jesus whom the crazed mob had succeeded in crucifying; and if they could crucify him, it was very probable that his immediate supporters would also be arrested and punished. These thoughts must have plagued the minds of the disciples, and on the third day when Jesus was to rise, they were still hidden away weeping and mourning. When Mary Magdalene told them Jesus was alive, they believed not (Mark 16:10, 11).

The inability or unwillingness to accept the story of Jesus and His resurrection is cause for mourning. The world's dark drapes of mourning are found today wherever Christ is not risen. Easter is not where Christ is still entombed. The heart without Christ has no real Easter until Christ is welcomed into that heart. His entrance expells the darkness and a new day dawns.

Hesitantly, reluctantly, and hardly do we admit that fear, doubt, wavering faith, and even unbelief may invade and haunt the minds of Christians. This condition, of course, is not a work of Christ; consequently, it can only result in more weeping and mourning. How much easier it may appear to accept lower, limited Christian accomplishments than to reach and strive for all that God's power will accomplish in us. Is it easier to utilize religious machinery to try to tunnel through,

fly over, or drive around mountains which our faith or lack of faith has not yet removed? If I cannot believe in a living, resurrected Christ, my life is affected accordingly. If I cannot believe Jesus saves, sanctifies, baptizes with the Holy Ghost, keeps, heals and satisfies, my life, then, is affected just as if He does not do these things. The mountains of fear, doubt, wavering faith, and unbelief are probably the greatest mountains that confront us. They are on the negative side of the story—not of Christ. The positive side lists unwavering faith, trust, and love which brings gladness. But, no doubt, some have already started the *spicy Easter trek* to anoint a dead Christ (Luke 24:1); others, upon hearing that Jesus is alive, simply continue mourning and weeping.

SUNRISE

Everything seemed at a standstill on that morning. A few courageous ladies started on their journey to anoint the body of Christ; but there was faith in their action. The group, apparently led by Mary Magdalene, who had been forgiven of much, made their way early in the morning toward Joseph's own tomb in which he had buried Christ. A *stony*, impossible problem of no known solution confronted them but, for some strange reason, did not deter their action. That they should make a trip to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus, knowing they could not have access to it, seems very illogical. Evidently, they expected some strong arm to be available to remove the stone, for they said among themselves, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" Mark 16:3. The only problem seemed *who* would do it. The ladies were going in faith that the stone would be removed. In this case an earthquake and an angel were used to meet the expectations of faith. Surely, it should make us all rejoice to know that God will hear us when we call on him silently or audibly. Grant that the stone was not so much moved by their faith as by the fact that it was time for Jesus to come forth; nevertheless, the stone was removed.

The Bible does not give the exact location of the

ladies when the earthquake occurred, and there is no mention that they knew of it. The stone was their problem. The angel of the Lord descended from heaven, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His presence caused the keepers to shake and to become as dead men, but, to those who sought Jesus, he acted as a consoling receptionist (Matthew 28:2-4). Adam Clark comments on Matthew 28:4, "God can, by one and the same means, comfort his servants, and terrify his enemies. The resurrection of Christ is a subject of terror to the servants of sin, and a subject of consolation to the sons of God; because it is a proof of the resurrection of both, the one to shame and everlasting contempt—the other to eternal glory and joy."

Mary Magdalene received the angelic assignment to go quickly and tell the disciples that Jesus had risen and that they should go to Galilee where they would see him (Matthew 28:7). "And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not," Mark 16:10-11. Any mourning the ladies might have had disappeared. Their mission was accomplished. They saw Jesus (Matthew 28:9).

AT EVENING

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you," John 20:19. The disciples had not been able to believe the reports of the women or the reports of some of the men that Jesus had risen from the dead (Mark 16:13). As long as their unbelief produced in them the same effect as if Jesus had not risen, there was no alternative but to mourn and weep. Donald G. Miller in his book *Fire in Thy Mouth* states, "The apostles had plenty of faith in God, but no deductions about the immortality of the soul, based on that faith, rekindled their blasted hopes following the Crucifixion. It was rather their personal encounter with the risen Lord which transformed their despair." Into that room where they were assembled came Jesus. He showed them His scars. "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord," John 20:20.

The presence of Jesus dispels mourning and impels gladness. If, on this Easter occasion, there be cause for mourning, may we get a clearer view of Jesus through our eyes of faith—today's channel of spiritual vision—that our hearts may be lifted above all mourning to a worship and a service of gladness. "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."



THE EASTER COMMISSION

(Continued from page 7)

Jesus well might have said to the Father when He returned to heaven, "Father, my work is completed; now the rest is up to my followers." The Father might have questioned, "But what if *they* fail? What other plan have you?" His final word would have been, "*They must not fail. I have no other plan!*" This is the Easter message.

SATAN'S EASTER BLUNDERS

(Continued from page 3)

stripes we are healed. There was a time when few were healed other than those who came into direct contact with the Lord, but now provision is made that multitudes are healed who accept and believe the healing power of Jesus Christ.

For an added measure of humiliation and shame, the Romans were inspired to crucify Jesus between two thieves. By thus placing Him so near these criminals, in a common death with them, it was manifest to everyone that they considered Him no better than a felon. This likewise proved to be a blunder, for God used the occasion to lift a soul from eternal despair and to teach an unforgettable lesson to all mankind. We do not know the background of the two malefactors who were crucified with the Lord, but we do know that one of them blasphemed the Lord, even as they were dying and the second made peace with Christ. This means that one of the thieves found eternal peace in the hour of his death.

We may be sure that this alone was enough to make the Devil blush for his blunder, but the incident was also used by the Lord for a much more universal purpose than the salvation of one soul. It drew a hard and fast line between penitence and impenitence, between life and death, between heaven and hell. Because of the cheerless death of the sinner who died with curses on his lips and because of the strengthened heart of the one who repented, untold multitudes have been persuaded to the life of holiness. Instead of humiliating Christ by having Him die between two thieves, Satan merely made it possible for a dying man to be saved and a graphic illustration to be visibly demonstrated. Everything that should have increased the humiliation and suffering of Christ was used by the Father that great glory should come from His death.

One of Satan's most colossal blunders was committed at the time of Christ's burial, when his determination to destroy Christ caused the Romans to seal the tomb and appoint a squad of soldiers to guard it. Without any doubt, Satan feared Christ would rise from the tomb and become frantic lest He should; so he inspired the Jews to request a guard for the tomb, plus a seal upon it, to prevent His being stolen away. He did this hoping to block the Resurrection, but what he did was to provide one of the strongest proofs that the Lord actually did rise from death. Instead of preventing the Resurrection, the sealed rock at the mouth of the tomb was rolled aside and the stalwart guards were stunned to sleep.

All the efforts of Satan were fruitless, for nothing could stay or hinder Christ when the first Easter morning dawned. Warm life flowed back into His body and His dormant temple of flesh became vibrant and vital again. Satan failed. He blundered—miserably! The sleeping guards and the discarded stone are proofs indisputable that He did come forth from death—and He lives today. Instead of *preventing*, they *proved*! Just as God used all that Satan could do to His own glory and the salvation of man, so He will, in the end, make all that is bad a strong accentuation of that which is holy and good.

HE LIVES

(Continued from page 4)

had almost forgotten to write a few words of what a living Christ means to the dead.

Many times, it has been my experience to stand beside a rectangular hole in the ground as we waited for the undertaker to get the casket in place for a burial. During such a time, many thoughts usually pass through my mind. There have been times when to me the hole in the ground meant the end. Never again did I expect to see the body that was soon to be deposited within its grip. There have been other times when I have felt almost urged to shout at the ground, "You may claim this body now but it is not yours and you will never be able to hold it."

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. *Wherefore comfort one another with these words,*" 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18.

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. *But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord,*"—1 Corinthians 15:54-58.

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March 26, 1956

THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

(Continued from page 13)

must put on immortality," 1 Corinthians 15:53. Then "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." There is the story told of the missionary in the heart of Africa who was working at translating the Bible. He had a native Christian working with him. They came to the third chapter of 1 John. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." At this point the native Christian exclaimed, "But Pastor, this cannot be right. It should say, 'When we see Him, we shall kiss His feet.'" "Then the missionary explained to him the bountifulness and graciousness of the provision of our Lord and explained that on that day of glory we shall really be like him. What a blessed hope. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure," 1 John 3:3.

But having known the power of His resurrection in regeneration and hoping to know power again in the resurrection of the body, we have by no means exhausted the provisions of our Heavenly Father. Between these two events is the time in which Paul desired "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection." After regeneration, it is the power of His resurrection that is the secret of victorious living. It gives victory over sin, the flesh and the world. It helps us overcome temptation and worry. That is the reason Paul could say: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," Galatians 3:20. When the risen Christ dwells within, He makes available that resurrection power. Our job is to avail ourselves of that power. How often we struggle in our own strength; how often we wrestle and worry over the problems of life until we realize that the living Son of God, the Master of every situation is standing beside us and dwelling within us. If we would just remember to seek Him first, how much less energy we would expend fighting in our own strength and how much happier we would be!

The Power of His resurrection is also the secret of victorious ministry. Paul, speaking of his ministry, wrote, "Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily," Colossians 1:29. Might we all strive to be a channel of power, that He might work through us mightily! When Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore..." it seems as though He was saying—and I think He was—"All power is mine; I am making it available to you; go, and, as you do, use it to accomplish those things which I have sent you to do." A powerless ministry is an empty hull. Our prayer should be for a spiritual ministry of power.

At this Eastertide let us think on and set our affection on "those things which are above," and may it be our supreme desire that we may know "him and the power of his resurrection."

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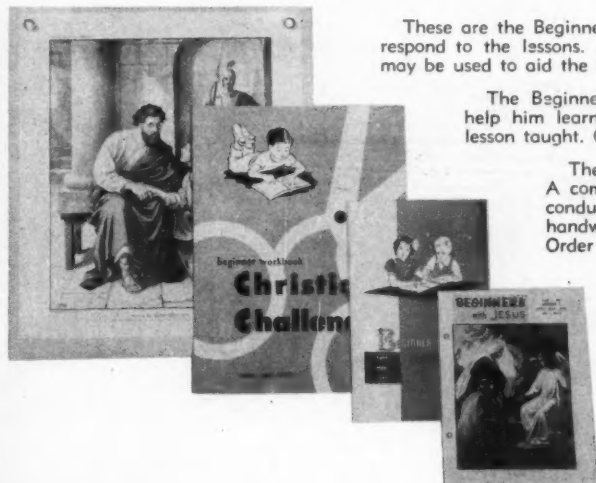
W. P. STANLEY, Editor, Sunday School Literature

January 1, 1956, we introduced the graded lessons in the Beginner and Primary Sunday School literature. There was a definite purpose and reason for leaving the uniform lessons and going to the graded series.

The Beginner lessons are planned and prepared to meet the simple needs of four- and five-year olds. They can learn about God and Jesus Christ on their own level of interest and understanding. Early in life the fact should be established in their thinking that God created the world in which we live. They must be taught to love and trust Him as our heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, His Son, as our Saviour. They should begin to learn simple Christian virtues and begin applying them in their everyday activity.

The Primary lessons are planned and prepared to meet the expanding needs of the six- to eight-year olds. Emphasis is placed on reverence for God, His house, and His Word. Worship must become a part of their experience and the Word the guide to conduct them. Most of all they must be taught the importance of individual salvation and be given an opportunity to accept Christ as their Saviour.

When these graded courses were introduced, there was some confusion in many Sunday Schools. This was because the lessons were different. Some schools tried to use Beginner materials to teach Primary lessons and Primary materials to teach Beginner lessons. If the Beginner teacher has all Beginner materials and the Primary teacher has all Primary materials, there will be no difficulty. For your convenience, we have prepared a list of the materials that each teacher should have in these two departments. Each teacher should have all of these to do a thorough teaching job.



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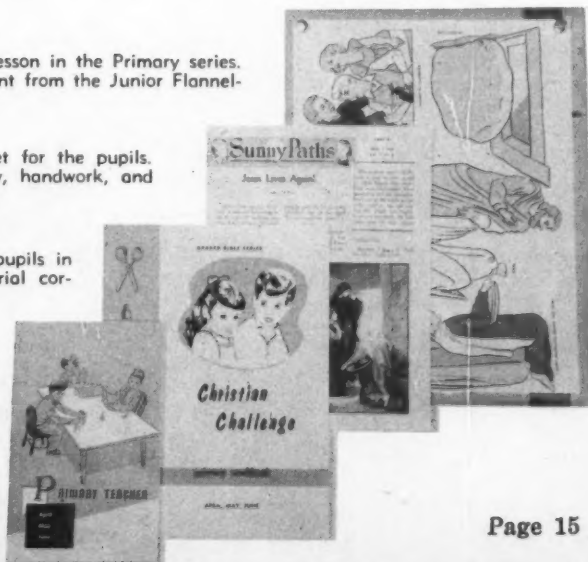


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The Primary paper, Sunny Paths, is a large, multi-color leaflet for the pupils. It contains the Bible picture, the Bible story, an additional story, handwork, and the illustrated Bible story in four colors. Order one for each pupil.

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